



Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences

World Forum on China Studies

Closing Remarks by Professor Tong Shijun, Vice President of Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, at the 2nd World Forum on China Studies

Ladies and gentlemen, dear guests:

After two days' intensive and happy discussions, the 2nd World Forum on China Studies hosted by SASS is coming to an end.

In the past two days, over 500 scholars--including 120 overseas representatives--from 31 countries issued around 250 theses on 21 topics. Among these theses, there're 10 conference speeches and 40 round-table conference speeches. This splendid building where we're gathering now is usually an international business center for commodity display, business negotiation and trade expansion. In the past two days, however, it became an international center of learning for exchanging opinions, clashing the thoughts and pooling cultures. Here, Kant talked with *The Book of Changes*, while Confucius chatted with John Dewey; here, the exchange rate of RMB and USD was not just an economic issue, but an ethical one, while Shanghai was not only compared with Beijing, Hong Kong and Taipei, but also related to Sydney, Johannesburg and Mumbai; here, "World Forum on China Studies" brought different visions together in China to review hot issues, as well as scholars from all over the world together to exchange their academic achievement; and here again, foreign scholars quoted Chinese traditional classics, while their Chinese counterparts borrowed wisdom from different countries. One participant issued a thesis with the title of "With the Purpose of the World, by the Means of China," which I'd like to adapt to define the effect of this conference--China and the outside world are both means and purposes for each other. In the 21st century China is becoming more dependent on the outside world, and meanwhile will take on more responsibility for itself. Therefore "international Chinese studies" and "China's international studies" should be closely combined and complement to one another.

This academic relation between China and the outside world provides a great angle, or for that matter a desirable one, for us to understand the entire relationship between them. Academic discussion is an activity of arguing calmly and peacefully. All the participants hope to be questioned after giving a speech, and also be ready to explain, defend or adjust his or her points of view with logic words and facts. However the rights and wrongs of both

the speaker and the inquirer are left to every participant to judge. Mr. Liang Shuming once said, the core of Chinese culture could be concluded in three words--reasoning things out. We sincerely hope that the world we're living in will be a world amenable to reason.

Certainly different nations and cultures may have different interpretations of "reason," but this Forum demonstrates that the importance lies in not only what "reason" is but also how to be reasonable. In this internet era, two fellows thousands of miles away from each other could be placed within a key's click. However, it is the realization of how to be reasonable is as important as what "reason" is that urged us to cover a long distance to attend this meeting. Closely following the well-known saying "To have friends come from far, is it not pleasure! ", Confucius added, "To remain unworried about being not known by men [of the state], is it not indeed to be a junzi (gentleman)!" It means that junzi-like scholars wouldn't fly into fury or even flounce out when they didn't come into agreement on some issues during an international conference, rather, they seek common ground while reserving differences with mutual respect and leave the issues to discussions in the future. Factually when we adopt this attitude, we have made an agreement that we're expecting to build a harmonious world where we may seek common ground while reserving differences with harmony but not uniformity.

Needless to say, scholars have limited capacity in building such a "harmonious world," but they can produce a far-reaching influence upon others, especially in this age of media. Their thoughts as well as their viewpoints can reach thousands of readers, audience, and netizens through the media. During these days, representatives from 26 foreign consulates attended the conference, including 16 consul-generals. And correspondents from over 30 domestic media made vivid reports. Local newspapers, such as *Jiefang Daily*, *Wenhui Daily*, *Oriental Morning Post*, *Xinmin Evening News*, *Shanghai Daily*, and *Social Sciences Weekly* used a whole page, even several pages, to make in-depth reports on the conference and its speeches. Meanwhile, websites such as People's Daily Online, Xinhua Online, Sina, Sohu, Eastday and SVA Net, made spot reports and guest interviews, and some of them also made web pages on special subjects. After the conference, some central and overseas media will further make follow-up reports on it.

We eagerly hope that the scholars' voice can not only reach the general public, but also the decision-makers. In order that you can get a better understanding about China's present conditions and future trends, we feel honored to have invited 14 important officials to attend the conference. They are both scholar-type and study-type officials, as advocated by President Hu Jintao. When you learn about the cultural foundation and political determination behind China's ideology of "harmonious world" from their speeches, you will also have reasons to believe your wisdom will enrich the intelligence of Chinese politicians as well as Chinese scholars. My foreign friends, I also hope that you can bring your leaders our conference fruits, making the world harmony and peace supported by more wise people.

The successful convening of this conference is the result of active participation of our distinguished guests and colleagues, of strong support and cooperation offered by various Shanghai municipal sectors, of selfless dedications of the whole staff, including those

young volunteers. I, on behalf of the Organizing Committee, extend my heartfelt appreciation to you all!

Should there be any inconvenience in some ways due to our lack of experience and inadequate efforts, please kindly forgive us.

My dear friends, the present forum is a bi-annual one sponsored by Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences under the auspices of Shanghai Municipal Government. The first Forum was held the year before last, and the next Forum will come the year after next, i.e., the year of 2008, when the Olympic Games will take place in Beijing, and our Academy will celebrate its 50th anniversary. I, on behalf of Mr. Wang Ronghua, President of Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, invite you in advance to come to Shanghai again in two years. At that time, the construction of a new building--our own International Academic Exchange Center--will have been completed. I sincerely wish we meet over there.

Thank you all.

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